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RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 6896
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 4599
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 3247
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 7740
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 1828
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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/R/MR:STHIBEAULT AND
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBOURGEOIS, AZAIBACK, AND
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA MDAVIDSON
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC
CENTCOM FOR CCPA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: Palestinian Territories, Lebanon, Syria/UK, Syria/Israel,
Iraq (6/19)

11. Summary: Syrian papers on June 18 and 19 focused on the visits
to Damascus of the Kuwaiti Crown Prince and the UK Shadow Foreign
Secretary. The papers reported that President Assad on June 18

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received a message from the Kuwaiti Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad
Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the latest developments in the region and
bilateral relations between the two countries. The message was
conveyed by Kuwait's Crown Prince Nawaf Al-Ahmad al-Jaber Al-Sabah
in a meeting with President al-Assad. The message included an
invitation to President Assad to visit Kuwait. President Assad and
his guest discussed regional developments in Iraq, Lebanon, and
Palestine. Both sides underlined the importance of joint Arab action
in the light of the difficult circumstances the region is passing
through, a matter that requires intensifying efforts to realize
security and stability in Iraq, unity of the Palestinian people and
a Lebanese accord.

Syrian papers also reported that President Assad and Shadow Foreign
Secretary of the British Conservative Party William Hague reviewed

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current regional issues and the peace process in the Middle East
based on relevant international resolutions and the necessity of
achieving a just and comprehensive peace. Viewpoints were identical
on these issues. Both sides agreed to exchange visits and
viewpoints regarding bilateral relations and issues of mutual
concern.

Hague also met with Deputy PM Abdullah Dardary and FM Walid
al-Moallem. During the meeting, Moallem warned the West against
taking sides in the intra-Palestinian conflict, while Dardari called
upon British businessmen and investors to invest in all fields in
Syria.

The papers quoted a foreign ministry official source who said that
the Lebanese government is accusing Syria without providing any
evidence.

Syrian papers also reported that the Syrian President received a
message from Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas regarding the
latest developments in the PA Territories. The message was presented

by Mr. Abbas Zaki to VP Farouk al Shara.

Papers also covered a meeting between Vice President Najah al Attar and a delegation from the "US Anti-war on Iraq Academics Organization." Attar discussed with them the academic relations between institutes and research institutions in Syria and the US. Syria's Ambassador to Washington, Imad Mustapha, who attended the meeting, said that the delegation comprises a group of academics who "feel ashamed of their government's policy in Iraq."

End of summary.

12. Selected Headlines:

"A message from President of the Palestinian National Authority Mahmoud Abbas to President Bashar al-Assad" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 6/18)

"Vice-President al-Attar meets American delegation opposing the invasion of Iraq" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 6/18)

"Olmert seizes the opportunity; Israel supports Abbas: Fayyad heads an Emergency Government; the legislature warns of a coup (government-owned al Ba'th, 6/18)

"President Assad receives a message from Prince of Kuwait and a delegation of UK Conservatives (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 6/19)

"President Assad reviews with Shiekh Nawaf and William Hague Palestinian, Iraqi and Lebanese issues and revival of the Peace Process" (Government-owned Tishreen, 6/19)

"Bush calls Abbas in support; Moscow asks Fayad government to talk to Hamas" (Government-owned Tishreen, 6/19)

13. Editorial Block Quotes:

"In order not to lose direction"

Omar Jaftali, a commentator in government-owned Tishreen, wrote (6/19): "The US, Israel and the EU speak now of a Palestinian partner for talks on the West Bank. The EU will resume its aid to the Emergency government. Ehud Olmert affirmed on the eve of his meeting with President Bush that the emergency government may give the opportunity to resume negotiations in preparation for a peace agreement, and that he is ready to hold regular talks with Abu Mazen about the political horizon of what will become a permanent agreement. Bush, for his part, affirmed in a phone call that he will support Abu Mazen's policy. This gives of course an impression that there is somebody who is pushing a wedge between Palestinians and is going too far in the geographic division between Gaza and the West bank, as if they were two separate issues...

"What is crystal clear is that the Palestinian cause is one cause that cannot be divided. And what the US administration is promising the Palestinians is nothing but going to the extreme in dividing Palestinian unity, for the good of Israel only."

"Legitimacy a l'Arabian"

Ibrahim Darraji, a lawyer and Op-ed writer in independent al Watan, wrote (6/19): "Some Arabs have rushed to take positions [regarding the Palestinian issue] to market the political positions of some parties. They met in Cairo last Friday, and, on the next day, papers published articles and analyses that Arabs had reiterated their support of legitimacy in Palestine and Lebanon. This is good; no one is against legitimacy, and no one has an interest in opposing it. But what is legitimacy? What is its criterion a l'Arabian? In Lebanon, legitimacy for them is represented by the

government of Siniora and no one else...although it has become illegal because it does not represent a major Lebanese sect and because the President and the Speaker are boycotting it....

"In Palestine, we see the opposite: legitimacy is represented by President Abbas and no one else, in confrontation with the government and the Parliamentary majority. Nobody was able to understand how Hamas, which obtained the confidence of the majority of the Palestinian people, is considered illegal, only because it opposed the Presidential Guard and other undisciplined security forces....

It must be understood that what decides legitimacy of regimes in most of our countries is not the polls or the will of the peoples.... it is the White House and no one else, and nothing else. Rulers remain legitimate as long as they fulfill US interests and abide by US instructions.... They can also be rewarded by a war hug from President Bush or a hot kiss on the cheek of Secretary Rice. However, this will immediately end if they oppose US policies or if they refuse to fulfill those policies that contradict the good of their own countries. This is more than enough to be thrown out of the US Eden and installed in the Axis of Evil."

Roebuck